

'Izzah in Ramadhaan

Transcribed from talks by Shaykh Ahmad Jibril

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‘IZZAH IN RAMADHAAN

Ramadhaan is a university of many courses. It is a main course and the essential course in Ibaadah of course, and spiritual aspects. But there are also courses in Ramadhaan on raising kids, on patience, on sharing and feeling part of the Ummah, on shame and modesty, on fear of Allah, on Tawbah and sincerity. In Ramadhaan, you learn something about each one of those, and each one of those is something worthy of several talks. However, today we are going to take one of those areas and that is pride, honour and glory, which in ‘Arabi is called ‘Izzah (عزة).

Islam is a religion of highness and elevation – a religion of diligence, seriousness and hard work. Ramadhaan is the month of pride and honour, and it teaches you this on several levels and several fronts. A person fasting is in an arena to attain honour on different fronts. Someone is going to say what are you talking about – how is Ramadhaan connected to ‘Izzah? When one leaves food, water and his desires, and then one leaves that which is prohibited throughout the year, he raises himself over worldly and earthly matters. He elevates himself by leaving the low and despicable matters, or possibly neutral matters. When he does that, he frees himself from habits, traditions and desires, and that is ‘Izzah to himself and over himself. When he becomes victorious over his own Nafs (his self inclination), then he has attained the peak of ‘Izzah because then nothing can stand in front of him.

He attains ‘Izzah and honour on another front when he stays away from controversy, arguing with others, ignorance and anger over others, and harming others.

إِذَا كَانَ يَوْمُ صَوْمٍ أَحَدِكُمْ ، فَلَا يَرْفُثْ وَلَا يَصْخَبْ

When any one of you is fasting, he should neither indulge in obscene language nor should he raise his voice.

That gives you honour and ‘Izzah in dealing with others. A believer attains ‘Izzah in the university of Ramadhaan with his worship (fasting), the deeds he does and abandoning that which is prohibited – that is the deep secret in attaining ‘Izzah to one’s internal self. That is boosting the Imaan and getting closer to Ar-Rahmaan – that is ‘Izzah.

Believers attain ‘Izzah in this month when they are encouraged to spend. What has spending got to do with ‘Izzah now? It has got a lot to do with it. When you are spending, it protects the weak and the poor. You save them from asking, you save the elders from poverty, and you save the low ones from being desperate. You raise them and elevate them from being low to having ‘Izzah. Islam wants you to live in honour, dignity and pride on all fronts, and that is why Islam said the hand giving is better than

the hand receiving. You can go on with many examples on this. Honour, pride and dignity attain you love and respect. It is only bad when one makes this a goal without keeping the guidance of Allah attached to it – that is when it veers off course.

The Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam told Ibn Abbaas – if you ask, ask Allah. If you seek aid, seek it in Allah. Why? That is ‘Izzah there. In Sahih al-Bukhari, az-Zubayr Ibn al-‘Awwaam radhiallahu ‘anhu said the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam said it is better for one to take a rope, go and cut wood and carry it on his back, than to ask others. Do anything but do not ask others – that is ‘Izzah. In fact, in Sahih Muslim some people came to the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam to give him Bay’ah (allegiance), and they gave him Bay’ah on Islam, the five pillars and then on obedience to him, and then he said do not ask anything from people. Why? To instill honour, pride and glory in this Ummah.

Wahb Ibn Munabbih said to a man who kept going to the rulers and asking them – woe to you, you keep returning to a man who closes his door in your face, shows you his poor side and hides his wealth from you. You leave the One who opens His door day and night, shows you how rich He is and asks you to ask Him. Taawoos told ‘Ataa – do not ever ask anyone who closes his door before you or has mediators or secretaries. Go to the One whose doors are always open until The Judgment Day, the One who ordered you to ask and promised you an answer. Abu Haazim (a scholar of his time) was asked what is your wealth? How much money do you have? He said my confidence in Allah is what I have, and despair in all human beings. The Ameer of his time wrote him a letter telling him whatever you need of wealth, write to me and I will send it to you. He said I have asked the One who gives me and whatever He gives me I am content with, and whatever He deprives me of I am pleased with. I am happy with what Allah gave me, so I do not need anything from you.

This is the month of ‘Izzah. Let us feel this feeling, let us seek it where it is at and let us try to attain it. Let us have that quality in ourselves and revive it in this Ummah. Not only is the ‘Izzah on a personal level, but it is on a higher level than that – the Ummah has to have a level of ‘Izzah as a whole. Allah honoured this Ummah and Allah gave this Ummah ‘Izzah in this month, in Badr – the battle of ‘Izzah. The month of Ramadhaan is the month in which the greatest conquest of all conquests took place – the conquest of Makkah was in Ramadhaan.

إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُبِينًا ﴿١﴾ الْفَتْحُ

Verily, We have given you (O Muhammad sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam) a manifest victory.
(Surat al-Fath: 1)

In the third year of Hijrah in Ramadhaan, the Muslims fended off an attack by Quraysh when they were going to retaliate because of their defeat in Badr. In the fifth year of Hijrah, the Prophet sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam began to prepare for Khandaq in Ramadhaan. Spain, the defeat of the Tartar and many more historic matters that brought ‘Izzah to this Ummah.

‘Izzah (honour and pride) is mentioned many times in the Qur’an.

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ جَمِيعًا... ﴿فَاطِرٌ: ١٠﴾

Whosoever desires honour, power and glory then to Allah belong all honour, power and glory [and one can get honour, power and glory only by obeying and worshipping Allah (Alone)]. (Surat Faatir: 10)

Umar goes to get the keys of Bayt al-Maqdis. He goes traveling on foot from Madinah to Jerusalem and shares the way with his servant. In the days of Umar, it was not a Jew or a Christian who got oppressed. We are not going to say a Muslim – not a Jew, not a Christian and not even an animal. Umar goes beyond what the 20th century can even imagine. Umar paves the way for sheep so they will not stumble. He goes from Madinah to Jerusalem and he takes turns riding the camel – his servant takes a turn, Umar takes a turn and the camel takes a turn. Yes, that is the beauty of Islam – even the camel gets to rest. Each one gets a third of the way. May Allah subhaanahu wa ta’aala send us the likes of Umar.

Abu ‘Ubaydah goes to the outskirts to greet his Khaleefah. When Umar happens to arrive, it is raining. Please visualise this scene with me – this scene where Umar is leading a camel, it is muddy because it is the desert, and he ties his shoelaces on his shoulder (one on the front and one on his back). Ibn Katheer went into detail describing the scene. He says the hot sun was hitting the bald head of Umar, meaning he did not have anything on his head. He was not wearing anything on his head or feet, one side of his dress was described as fully shredded, and the other parts were stitched up.

You can just imagine Abu ‘Ubaydah going to his leader, taking Umar to the side and meeting with him. Umar, you are going to meet the heads of the Romans (the bishops and the priests). They are surrendering the keys to you – this is a historic event Umar. Umar, how about you change your clothes? That is when Umar lets out a sigh and says had anyone other than you said this, I would have made an example out of him for the Ummah of the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu ‘alayhi wa sallam. Basically, he is saying Abu ‘Ubaydah, you are special – you have expanded the Muslim land beyond what many did and you are among the top generals of this Ummah. Had it been anyone else who said that, I would have punished him to set an example for the whole Ummah to learn a lesson from. Then Umar said his golden tweet – we are people who are honoured with Islam, if we choose other than Islam we will be humiliated. Anything other than Islam and anything other than the teachings of Islam.

This last quote and parts of the story are mentioned by Ibn al-Mubaarak in Az-Zuhd (الزهد), Ibn Abi Shaybah, Hannaad, al-Haakim in Al-Mustadarak (المستدرک), Abu Na'eem in Al-Hulyah (الحلیة), and it is in the fourth volume of Al-Bidaayah Wan-Nihaayah (البداية والنهاية). It is as authentic and solid as if it was in the Sihaah, and some versions have certain details that are different at the beginning of the story.

He told us the simple solution to the matters of the Ummah, and how to attain 'Izzah. Mere words of telling him to change his clothes got him upset because he deemed that he is seeking pride in other than Islam, and he was going to use the Dhurrah (whip) over the head of one of the biggest generals.

أوه ! لو قال هذا غيرك يا أبا عبيدة - لجعلته نكالا لأمة محمد صلى
الله عليه وسلم ، نحن قوم أعزنا الله بالإسلام ، فمهما ابتغينا العزة بغير
الإسلام أذلنا الله

Wallahil-'Adheem my father made me memorise it when I was less than five years old. Embed it into the hearts of your children – this is how you ascertain 'Izzah. Sometimes I wonder what Umar would do with his Dhurrah on the heads of the 'Ulamaa today who are not seeking honour in a new set of clothing, but they are seeking honour in a new set of values and ideologies – those who throw themselves in the laps of every predator that looks at them, seeking honour and glory through them.

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ جَمِيعًا... ﴿فَاطِرُ: ١٠﴾

Whosoever desires honour, power and glory then to Allah belong all honour, power and glory [and one can get honour, power and glory only by obeying and worshipping Allah (Alone)]. (Surat Faatir: 10)

If you desire honour, glory and power, then it comes from Allah. All of it – He did not have to say it in the verse but it is for emphasis – all of it comes from Allah. It is not arrogance, but it is not being ashamed to be a Muslim. You show your pride in the teachings of Islam and the laws of Islam. You do not care about those who criticise you and the blame of the blamers – that is 'Izzah.

A famous 'Aalim called al-Mahdi was sitting in the Masjid once, and the Khaleefah happened to walk into the Masjid. Everyone ran to the Khaleefah and this man remained sitting in the

Masjid doing whatever he was doing. They told him do you not want to get up and greet the Khaleefah? While the Khaleefah was listening, he said people only stand to the Lord of the universe. It was not a special greeting of Salaam, he is going to embrace him or he is a friend he has not seen in a long time, where you can stand up. It was just people going and crowing around to kiss up to him and get a look at him. The guards went to apprehend this man but the Khaleefah said stop, do not touch him, Wallahi what he said made every hair on my body stand. The Shaykh had pride and 'Izzah, and the leader had fear of Allah. Those who adulate and kiss up to leaders for money, prestige and others reasons have lowered themselves, and they lack pride and 'Izzah in this religion.

Maalik Ibn Anas was an Imaam of his time and Haroon ar-Rasheed (the leader) told him come over and teach me and my kids. There is no Imaam like Maalik today and there is no leader like Haroon ar-Rasheed today. Any 'Aalim would have dreamed of that opportunity, because all you have to do is read in the western books about how much they say Haroon used to spend on knowledge and poets. Imaam Maalik said to him:

الْعِلْمُ يُؤْتَى وَلَا يَأْتِي

You seek knowledge, knowledge does not come to you.

When Haroon ar-Rasheed entered the house of Imaam Maalik, he sat up and put his back on the wall. He was getting comfortable and Maalik said honour your elders – I am older, respect me and sit up. Haroon complied and showed him respect. Then Haroon told him the statement – he said others lowered themselves to us with their knowledge and we did not benefit from them, we humbled ourselves to your knowledge and we benefited from it.

'Izzah is on all levels. Look at the Khulafaa' (leaders) back then – even the oppressive leaders. In this month 223 after the Hijrah, al-Mu'tasim in 'Amooriyyah. Al-Mu'tasim went to fend off someone called Baabik al-Harmi and when he went to fight him, the Romans saw a weakness that the Muslims had. They took a portion of the Muslim land – they invaded it and killed the children and the elders. They had no mercy and compassion on anyone and they did not spare anyone. They took over a thousand female Muslimate as slaves (concubines) and they slaughtered their kids before them. Then they took Muslim male prisoners, put iron rods in their eyes, cut their ears off and snatched their noses off. Then comes a shout from one of the Muslims:

واعتصماه !

She shouted for help from the Mu'tasim and on the spot, he went to her aid.

What a mockery when you look at today, what foolishness. The Syrians are being massacred and it is something that is going to go in history as one of the top catastrophes. It has been

going on for two years but after Mufti Obama declares war and openly says now he is going to help them, suddenly the Shuyookh pop up in Egypt and elsewhere, everyone wants to talk about it and speak those big terminologies. Where were you two years before that? Where were you two years ago when they were getting slaughtered like sheep? Those are hailed as heroes after two years and after they were given the green light? What an Ummah in their low thinking and what a backward thinking Ummah we have. I ask Allah subhaanahu wa ta'aala to open their eyes so they can analyse things the proper way, because there is no 'Izzah. Those 'Ulamaa are the heroes? They asked a Syrian man what do you think about what Mufti Obama is doing and what the Shuyookh are doing now they got the green light – they are speaking, meeting, declaring and using the big terminologies. He said we never waited for them and we do not see the affect of that here. Nothing of that is apparent to us and they are two years late on that.

When a woman called Waa Mu'tasimaah to that Khaleefah, he did not sit and think and wait two years. History says he jumped off his bed and he said everyone prepare – history documents that he reacted on the spot. One of the historians said that the woman who shouted Waa Mu'tasimaah was a descendant of Faatimah radhiallahu 'anha (meaning a descendant of the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam), and when she called Waa Mu'tasimaah she was being tortured. Mocking and laughing, the king of the Romans said you think al-Mu'tasim is going to come here on horses of Dalmatian to rescue you? Horses of Dalmatian were expensive and a special, rare breed of horses. Al-Mu'tasim told his soldiers go get me every Dalmatian horse you can get, and they went and got him more than four thousand Dalmatian horses. He put them at the front of the army and when he got near to 'Amooriyyah, he said no one touch that woman but me – I am going to be the one to rescue her. When he got to her and he freed her, he said:

إشهد لي عند جدك أني أتيت لخلاصك ، وفي مقدمة عسكري أربعة
آلاف أبلق

Testify – go tell your grandfather (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) I rescued you with four thousand Dalmatian horses leading the army.

That is the men. He ordered that the one who slapped her be executed and then he torched 'Amooriyyah. This was in 223 after the Hijrah, in Ramadhaan.

Sometimes part of 'Izzah is that one might have to say a word that is going to cost him his life or put him in prison. For Islam, it is worth it. The Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam said the best of all martyrs is Hamzah, and a man who stands up in the face of an oppressive leader, enjoins the good and forbids the evil, and is killed by him. It is in Al-Mustadarak Al-Haakim.

Look at the 'Izzah of Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqaas – this is what we want to establish. His mother told him you choose a religion other than that of your fathers and forefathers? Wallah I am not going to eat or drink or sit in the shade, until I die or you change your religion. I am going to die and then you are going to die in agony, because you let me die. He tried to convince her and he was very dutiful – an example of being dutiful to his mother. When he saw it was not working, the 'Izzah came out. Mum, sit down, we have to talk. You know how much I love you, you know how much everybody talks about my love to you and how I am dutiful to you. Wallahi if you had one hundred souls, one after the other left out of you and the only way to save them would be for me to leave this religion, I am not going to leave it. Eat and drink and go in the shade.

The women set examples of 'Izzah for the men of today to follow. Before Abu Sufyaan became Muslim, he went to Madinah to negotiate some matters with the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, so he goes to the house of his daughter who is the wife of the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam – Umm Habeebah. His daughter quickly folds the mattress of the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, and he could not believe what he saw. What is going on here? He tells the daughter – am I too good for that mattress or is that mattress too good for me? He could not believe his eyes. He thought maybe she was too ashamed to have him sit on such a mattress, because his stature is above that. She said no, you are not worthy of sitting on a mattress of the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam, you are a Mushrik Najis. He said you have gone crazy after me daughter. No, she did not go crazy – pride and 'Izzah in Islam.

There is an agenda by those sell out figures we have, to strip Muslims of pride and 'Izzah in their religion. Some people see it and others do not. You do not do Salah only – you do Salah and you spice it with 'Izzah. You do your Hijaab, your Niqaab or your bead with 'Izzah in it. You teach Islam with 'Izzah, especially us here in the west. Show your pride in this religion because if you do not, Allah will replace you with those who will show pride in their religion.

Someone might say come on Shaykh, the Ummah is weak now and it is different. You can still show your 'Izzah and let me give you some examples. Someone will say that is when the Khilaafah was and Muslims were respected, but you could be weak and still show your 'Izzah. You could be a prisoner and still show your 'Izzah. You could be under torture and duress, and still show your 'Izzah. Everyone knows the story of Bilaal.

What about Khubayb Ibn 'Adi when they took him as a prisoner and they were going to crucify him. He said let me pray two Rak'ahs and he got up to pray two Rak'ahs. Even in those two Rak'ahs, he showed 'Izzah. He prayed and he hastened in them, so they will not think that he fears death. They asked him – would you not rather be at your home with your wife and children, and Muhammad (sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam) be here instead of you? He said I would rather be where I am at here, rather than know that the Prophet Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam got a little thorn in the tip of his finger. Rather be where Khubayb? Khubayb, explain to this defeated, surrenderous Ummah – where would you

rather be? He would rather be crucified. He would rather his flesh be shredded, rather than know that the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam got a little thorn in the tip of his finger. 'Izzah!

Then they began to hail his blessed body with spears and arrows, as he says:

إِلَى اللَّهِ أَشْكُو غُرْبَتِي ثُمَّ كُرْبَتِي
وَمَا أَرْصَدَ الْأَحْزَابُ لِي عِنْدَ مَصْرَعِي

O Allah, I complain to You the hardship I face, and that which the coalition have conspired to do to me.

فَذَا الْعَرْشِ ، صَبَّرْنِي عَلَى مَا يُرَادُ بِي
فَقَدْ بَضَّعُوا لَحْمِي وَقَدْ يَاسَ مَطْمَعِي

O Allah The Lord of The Throne, grant me patience in that which they plan to do to me. O Allah, I despair in everyone except You.

وَذَلِكَ فِي ذَاتِ الْإِلَهِ وَإِنْ يَشَاءُ
يُبَارِكْ عَلَى أَشْلَاءِ شَلُوْ مُمَرَّعٍ

All that is for the sake of Allah and if He wills, He will bless the shredded pieces of my flesh.

وَقَدْ خَيْرُونِي الْكُفْرَ وَالْمَوْتَ دُونَهُ
وَقَدْ هَمَلْتُ عَيْنَايَ مِنْ غَيْرِ مَجْزَعٍ

They gave me the choice of Kufr, I would rather take death over that. Then he said my eyes tear, but he was trying to explain that they did not tear out of fear from them, but out of fear from You.

He goes on to elaborate:

وَمَا بِيَ حِذَارُ الْمَوْتِ ، إِنِّي لَمَيِّتٌ
وَلَكِنْ حِذَارِي جَحَمَ نَارٍ مُلْفَعٍ

I fear not death, I fear Hell O Allah, I fear You O Allah. He is crying and weeping out of fear from Allah, and he is dying and getting shredded for the sake of Allah! What are we going to say? Laa Hawla Wa Laa Quwwata Illaa Billah. Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilayhi Raaji'oon.

فَلَسْتُ أَبَالِي حِينَ أُقْتَلُ مُسْلِمًا عَلَى أَيِّ جَنْبٍ كَانَ فِي اللَّهِ مَصْرَعِي

Look at the 'Izzah. I do not care what side I die on, as long as I die a Muslim.

فَلَسْتُ بِمُبْدٍ لِلْعَدُوِّ تَخَشُّعًا وَلَا جَزَعًا إِنِّي إِلَى اللَّهِ مَرْجِعِي

I am not going to show to my enemies humbleness or humility, I am going to show it to Allah – the One I am going to return to.

Ultimate, eloquent meanings of 'Izzah. 'Izzah is not compromise, even at weak points. Abu Bakr was at his weakest point when the whole Arabian Peninsula turned against him, but he stood up firm. He was one man and he said if you do not help me, I am going to go to them by myself.

Look at Ibn Mas'ood in times like ours – times where people were terrified and scared. It was a weak point of the Ummah and one of the weakest points during the time of the Prophet sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam. He says I am going to go shout to them the verses of the Qur'an. They said they are going to hit you, but he said Allah is going to protect me. What made him go out to do that? Is it a Waajib? No, it is the pride and 'Izzah. He went out and started reciting:

الرَّحْمَنُ ﴿١﴾ عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ ﴿٢﴾ الرَّحْمَنُ: ١

The Most Beneficent (Allah)! Has taught (you mankind) the Qur'an (by His Mercy). (Surat Ar-Rahmaan: 1-2)

People said what is going on with Ibn Umm Ma'bad? He is by the Ka'bah shouting. They run up to him and they beat him. He goes louder, so they beat him. He bleeds and he goes unconscious, then his companions come to him and wake him up. He says I want to go at it again, but they stopped him and they refused to let him. Why did he do that? There is no

Waajib in the Qur'an, there is no ordain and it is not a Sunnah. He did it because of his 'Izzah and to show his 'Izzah.

When Khaalid reached Hiraqil, they were amazed at the pride and the advancing of the Muslims. Hiraqil asked his people what is going on here? Are their people more? He said no. Are their weapons more advanced? No. He said what is going on? An old man said let me speak. He spoke and he said these are people who do not drink, and we drink – 'Izzah. These are people who do not commit adultery and we commit adultery – 'Izzah. These are people who pray the night and we do not pray the night. These are people who fast the day and we do not fast the day. Hiraqil said indeed that is how victory is achieved.

'Izzah is not about scaring and terrorising people. No, 'Izzah is prestige and status. We need to revive that in our hearts. In 1876 of the western calendar, Sultaan Abdul-Hameed II was a young thirty four year old man and he could have had whatever he wanted. They offered him whatever gold and wealth he wanted, to give up a little portion of Falasteen. He had problems in Balqaan, problems with the Russians and pressure from all over, but he said to Dr Herzl – do not try it, I will not give a hand span of the land of Falasteen. It is not owned by me, it is owned by the Islamic Ummah – the Ummah that irrigated that land with their blood. Save your millions, because the only way you will get it is if the Khilaafah goes down and then you can take it for free. While I am alive, I would rather for a knife to shred my flesh piece by piece, than to give a hand span of the land of the Muslims away. They tried to assassinate him many times for those words and that stand. Wallahi, a knife shredding me alive is easier for me, than to give a little hand span of Falasteen away. 'Izzah!

...وَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ وَلِرَسُولِهِ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَلَكِنَّ الْمُنَافِقِينَ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٨﴾ المنافقون:



But honour, power and glory belong to Allah, His Messenger (Muhammad sallallahu 'alayhi wa sallam), and to the believers, but the hypocrites know not. (Surat al-Munaafiqoon: 8)

Show your pride. I am not going to say do not do Haraam, but do not do Haraam and show your pride in it. Do the ordains and put your pride in it. Do the Sunnah and have pride in it. Do the Waajib with pride in it. Have pride when asked about Islam. When asked about the teachings of Islam, do not be shy and embarrassed. When it is time for Salah, jump up to it wherever you are at. It is not illegal – jump up to it with pride, dignity and glory. Learn your bright white history, so you can defend this history with pride when they talk about it. Show your pride in the laws of Islam – the laws of the Creator. Show them how good they are and how their laws have proven to be a failure, while the laws of Laa Ilaaha Illallah Muhammadar-Rasoolullah are the laws of the Creator and the only laws suitable for mankind. Show your pride in that.